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Passports for Reds: Guilty Plea

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WASHINGTON.

Paul Carl Meyer, 25-year-old Chicagoan, pleaded guilty yesterday to delivering fifteen United States passports to the Russians in East Berlin.

His plea, voiced in Federal court in Chicago, may spare the government from revealing details of a case of international intrigue that ranged from Quito, Ecuador, in the Andes, to Communist territory behind the Berlin wall.

But some details have become known, including the fact that Meyer walked into the Chicago office of the Central Intelligence Agency on June 7, 1963, and confessed that he had handed over the passports to the Russians some three months earlier.

The CIA, which under the law has no internal police powers, listened to his story and sent him to the FBI, which deals with counter-espionage cases.

At the Chicago field office of the FBI, Meyer told his story again—it was not the first time the FBI had heard parts of it.

For some time, the FBI had been receiving complaints about a man, not fully identified, who promised American citizens jobs in South America if they would take out passports and turn them over to him for safekeeping. The man used different aliases.

After receiving the passport from the job-seeker, the man would disappear. As it became clear yesterday from Meyer's plea, the passports ended up in Soviet hands, where they could be used to slip spies into the U. S.

The Justice Department, which disclosed the case in bare outline Tuesday, has not said whether Meyer sold the passports to the Russians, but officials here say he acted for money and was not politically motivated.

The going rate for a valid U. S. passport on the international spy market is anywhere from \$100 to \$1,500.

Federal investigators are still trying to determine whether the Soviets used any of the passports which the Justice Department said Meyer delivered in East Berlin in February, 1963.

Since he did not confess

until June, the Russians would have had more than three months to put the documents to good use.

The Russians, of course, could always forge a U. S. passport in entirety, but experts here said it is a lot simpler if they have a blank or a valid passport to start with. Then the passport can be doctored.

The KGB in several known instances has inserted agents into this country with valid passports issued to Americans, whose identities the Soviet spy has assumed. Soviet master spy Rudolf I. Abel and his assistant, Reino Hayhanen, had such passports.

Soviet spies Alexander Sokolov and a woman known as Joy Ann Garber had forged U. S. passports when arrested in Washington July 2, 1963. Sokolov used the name Robert K. Baltch, the real name of a Roman Catholic priest from Amsterdam, N. Y. The woman used the name of Joy Ann Garber, which belonged to a housewife in Norwalk, Conn.

Raymond I. Suekoff, attor-

ney for Meyer, revealed in Federal Court yesterday that his client, married to an Ecuadorian woman and father of a 7-month-old girl, had confessed to the CIA and the FBI. Officials here confirmed this. The FBI and CIA checked out Meyer's story here and abroad during a long investigation.

The Justice Department said Tuesday that Meyer taught English in Quito during 1961 and 1962, and that he was in East Berlin in February 1963. He confessed in June 1963, one day after returning from abroad, entered the Army in July (with FBI knowledge, his attorney said) and left the Army a year later.